

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6821

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: JA, US

SUBJ: LOCKHEED SCANDAL: P-C3 PROCUREMENT

1. DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS THE JDS'S PLANS TO BUY LOCKHEED PC-C3 ORION LONG-RANGE MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT AS PART OF ITS FY-77 BUILDUP PLAN HAVE BECOME A MAIN TOPIC IN JAPAN'S WIDENING LOCKHEED SCANDAL. ON FEB.9 JDA DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAKATA AND DEPUTY DIRGEN KUBO GAVE SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCES TO EXPLAIN WHY THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL HAD DECIDED IN OCT.'72 TO SELECT THE P-C3 OVER A DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED MODEL TO FILL ITS NEED FOR A NEW ASW PLANE TERMED THE "PXL". SAKATA SAID "DECISION WAS REACHED ON BASIS OF HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL JUDGEMENT FORMED AT (SEPT. 1972) TANAKA-NIXON TALKS WHICH CALLED FOR REDUCTION OF (JAPAN'S) DOLLAR RESERVES.." HE ADDED THAT BECAUSE OF LOCKHEED SCANDAL JDA WOULD HENCEFORTH PROCEED VERY CAUTIOUSLY IN SELECTING A PXL AIRCRAFT SINCE "WE WILL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE HOW THE LOCKHEED INCIDENT IS SETTLED."

2. KUBO PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT THAT PLANS TO PRODUCE THE PXL DOMESTICALLY HAD BEEN DROPPED AS RESULT OF MEETING BETWEEN THEN PM TANAKA, THEN DEPUTY CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY MASUHARU GOTODA AND THEN BUDGET BUREAU DIRGEN HIDEYOSHI AIZAWA JUST PRIOR TO NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL MEETING ON OCT 9. 1972, DREW INDIGNANT DENIALS FROM BOTH GOTODA AND AIZAWA ON

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EVENING OF FEB. 9. AIZAWA SAID HE NEVER DISCUSSED THE TYPE

OF PXL TO BE PROCURED WITH ANYONE; GOTODA SAID HE HAD NEVER DISCUSSED LOCKHEED AS A POTENTIAL SUPPLIER AND THAT TANAKA WAS NOT INVOLVED IN DECISION ON PXL. KUBO SUDDENLY CALLED A MIDNIGHT PRESS CONFERENCE ON FEB. 9 TO RETRACT HIS "EXTREMELY INAPPROPRIATE" STATEMENT THAT TANAKA HAD DECIDED ON SWITCH TO LOCKHEED PROCUREMENT AFTER MEETING WITH GOTODA AND AIZAWA. STATEMENT WAS "MY IMAGINATION, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE PM DISCUSSED AT THAT MEETING."

3. THIS HASTY BACKTRACKING BY KUBO LED TO HIS BEING SUMMONED TO LOWER HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE INTERPELLATIONS THIS MORNING WHERE JSP'S NARAZAKI QUESTIONED THE TRUTHFULNESS OF HIS RETRACTION AND REQUESTED TANAKA, GOTODA AND AIZAWA BE CALLED FOR SWORN TESTIMONY. CGP (KOMEITO) AND JCP SPOKESMEN ALSO TOLD PRESS THIS MORNING THAT THEY WOULD PURSUE GOVERNMENT FULLY ON HOW THE "POLITICAL DECISION " TO BUY P-3C'S FROM LOCKHEED HAD BEEN MADE.

4. FEB 10 EVENING EDITOR YOMIURI SHIMBUN REPORTS GOVERNMENT SOURCE AS HINTING KUBO WILL BE FIRED. SAME ARTICLE SAYS KUBO CONSIDERING RESIGNATION.
HODGSON

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